LETTER

From the

Revd Mr. Sergeant & Of Stockbridge,

TO

Dr. Colman

Of Boston;

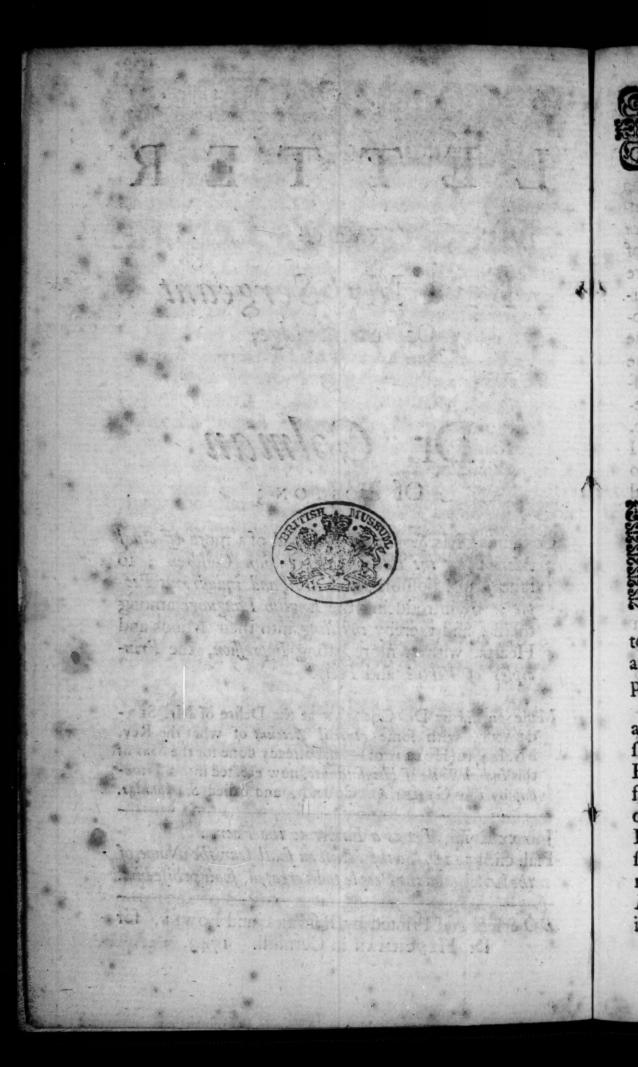
Containing Mr. Sergeant's Proposal of a more effectual Method for the Education of Indian Children; to raise 'em if possible into a civil and industrious People; by introducing the English Language among them; and thereby instilling into their Minds and Hearts, with a more lasting Impression, the Principles of Virtue and Piety.

Made publick by Dr. Colman at the Defire of Mr. Ser-GEANT, with some general Account of what the Rev. Mr. Isaac Hollis of --- has already done for the Sons of this Indian Tribe of Houssatannoc, now exected into a Township by the GENERAL COURT, and called Stockbridge.

Job xxix. 16. I was a Father to the Poor.

Psal. cii. 15, 18. So the Heathen shall fear the Name of the Lorp, and the People to be created, shall praise bird.

BOSTON, Printed by Rogers and Fowle, for D. HENCHMAN in Comhill. 1743.





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Stockbridge, August 1. 1743.

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Reverend Sir,

Now fend you a general and rough Draught of that Design for the Educafome Times formerly hinted to you, that I had formed in my Mind, with a Desire, that you would communicate it

to the World in as publick a Manner, as possible, and with fuch Recommendations, as you may think proper.

What I propose therefore in general is to take such a Method in the Education of our Indian Children, as shall in the most effectual Manner change their whole Habit of thinking and acting; and raise them, as far as possible, into the Condition of a civil industrious and polish'd People; while at the same Time the Principles of Vertue and Piety shall be carefully instilled into their Minds in a Way, that will make the most lasting Impression; and withal to introduce the English Language among them instead of their own imperfect and barbarous Dialect.

And

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And to accomplish this Design, I propose to procure an Accommodation of about 200 Acres of Land in this Place, (which may be had without any Cost of the Indian Proprietors) and to erect an House on it, such as shall be thought convenient for a Beginning; and in it to maintain a Number of Children and Youth (not under ten, nor above twenty Years of Age;) and to have them under the Direction, Care and Tuition of two Masters, one to take the Overfight of them in their Hours of Labour, and the other in their Hours of Study; and to have their Time fo divided between Study and Labour as to make one the Diversion of the other, that as little Time as posfible may be lost in Idleness. It will, I think, be necessary, there should be two Masters for this Purpose, because it would be too tedious a Task for one. I propose that the Fruit of their Labour shall go to their own Maintenance and to carrying on the general Defign; except perhaps some particular Premiums out of the Profits of their Labour, if it can be afforded, to encourage Industry. I propose also to have a Stock of Cattle, &c. maintained on the Place for the same Purpose.

I purpose to take into the Number, upon certain Conditions, from among any of the Tribes of Indians round about; that by their Means, under the Blessing of God, the Principles of Vertue and Christian Knowledge may be fpread as far as possible; which, perhaps, in a Course of Years may, by the Grace of God, open the Way for the Propagation of Christianity to

the remotest Tribes.

To lay the Foundation, and to fupport so great a Design as this, will without Doubt, cost a great Deal of Money; the Supply of which depends altogether upon the Smiles of divine Providence, and the Charity of good People, who may think it proper to savour it.

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The Need of some such Design as this, is very obvious to all that are in any Measure acquainted with the Disposition and State of the Indians in America. It is well known, that Vertue and Piety make but a flow Progress among them in the Methods that have hitherto been used to promote these Ends. Nor can I think of any Thing so likely, as what is here proposed, in human Probability, to root out their vicious Habits, and to change their whole Way of Living. I hope therefore the apparent Goodness of this Defign, will recommend it to all charitably disposed Perfons, who would gladly bonour God with their Substance; and that it will approve itself to and be promoted by Persons of all Parties; since it is a Defign generous in its Intention, and calculated for the common Good of a very miserable and degenerate Part of our Race, and has no Party-View in it at all. I perswade myself therefore that all those who are concerned for the Glory of our common MAKER, and the Father of the Spirits of all Flesh, and for the Honour of our common Saviour, to whom the Heathen are given for his Inheritance, and the utmost Ends of the Earch for his Possession, or that are only inspired with the generous Sentiments of Compassion to the miserable, will unite in promoting the Design here proposed.

If PROVIDENCE encourage and succeed this Design, and a Fund sufficient to carry it on, can be procured, I purpose to enlarge the Foundation, so as to take in Girls, as well as Boys, to be educated in a Manner suitable to the Condition of their Sex; for I think the Cultivation of both the Sexes has a natural Tendency to improve each other more easily and

fuccessfully.

I design the Discipline to be used with them shall be as strict as those will bear, who know nothing like Government among themselves, and have an Aversion to every Thing that restrains their Liberty.

I know it is apt to be fuspected in such Designs, pretended to be for the publick Good, that there is some Self-Interest at Bottom, which is the Spring of the Motion. If the World suspect any Thing of this Sort in the present Projection, as some no Doubt will; and the rather perhaps, because it has been amused with Projections of this Kind, which have appeared to many meer personal and selfish, or, at best only Party Designs, I know not how to give any further Satisfaction for the present, than to declare solemnly that I have no other Aim, than the Good of the Indians, and that I have no Expectation of any personal Benesit at all, more than the meer Satisfaction of being instrumental, under God, of doing them so great a Kindness, and rendering them a more bappy Society by cultivating

Humanity and Vertue among them.

That the Indians, in general, are a People difficult to be reformed from their own foolish, barbarous, and wicked Customs, the Unsuccessfulness of Attempts upon them for this Purpose is a melancholly Proof, which though it may appear discouraging in further Endeavours; yet, I think, to a generous Mind it should rather be improved as an Argument to form and execute new Projections for this Purpose. And indeed perhaps the Neglett of promoting Industry among them is the chief moral Reason of so little being done to Purpose in forming their Manners. And therefore, I hope the Want of wish'd for Success in other Attempts will be no Objection with any that defire to be Benefactors to Mankind, against contributing their Part to this, which, I think, has so apparent Tendency to promote Industry and Humanity among a barbarous People. But tho' I think the Design here proposed has the probable Appearance of proving fuccessful, yet I do not flatter my felf with any Romantick Expettations of accomplishing all the Ends proposed at once; nor is it to be expetted in the ordinary Course of Things but that a great Deal of Cost and Pains with

with Respect to many particular Persons will be lost, This is what happens of Course in all Designs of this Nature: And yet, it is to be hoped, some Good will be done : Nor will the Benefactors loose their Reward with God, though the Defign should not be crowned with all the happy Success might be wished and hoped for. The meer Suspicion, that the Design in the Event will prove unfuccessful, ought not, I think, to discourage the Attempt. How many are there, that frustrate the very Grace of God itself? How many with Respect to whom Christ bas died in vain? And yet (to speak after the Manner of Men) this was no Hindrance to his laying down bis Life for Sinners. He indeed has obtain'd all the Recompence in the Salvation of Souls, which he had in his Eye; and GOD all the Glory of his benevolent Purposes. He fees the Fruit of the Travail of his Soul, and is satisfied. Nor will any Benefactors here loose the Praise and Reward of their gracious Intention and Endeavours. (See Ifa. xlix. 1,—6.)

It may perhaps with some be an Objestion against attempting any Thing of this Sort, that the Indians are a base, ungrateful People, insensible of Kindnesses done them. To this I reply, that though it be true, that this is the base, ungrateful Temper of Indians, yet I think it is rather an Argument in Favour of a Projection calculated to promote Humanity among them, than otherwise: For the Objection supposes them to be greatly debased, and shews the Need there is of cultivating a Soil so barren, or rather a Soil so overrun with hateful Weeds, and pricking Thorns. But whatever Weight this Objection might have with others, certainly it ought to have none with a Christian, who is commanded to imitate the Beneficence of bis HEAVENLY FATHER, who does Good to the Evil and Unthankful. Had this Consideration sway'd the Mind

Mind of our bleffed Saviour, would he ever have fhed his Blood for those, who pursued his Life to Death? Nor did God refuse to distinguish the Israelites with his peculiar Favours from all the Families of the Earth, because they were an ungrateful stiff-necked and rebellious House.

I would not have it thought from what I have written above, that all that has been done here, to introduce Christianity and good Manners has proved altogether in vain; for, through the Grace of God, some good Effects have attended our Labours here: And, the Indians seem now well prepared for the Execution of what I have here proposed; which their Jealouss would have been an effectual Hindrance to a few Years ago.

I shall be glad of the Thoughts of candid and ingenious Gentlemen communicated to me for the Improvement of the Design here proposed: And shall be ready to answer any Queries that may be made in Re-

lation to it.

Thus, Sir, you have what I defire may be communicated to the publick from me. It will be well perhaps that you should preface this with some general Account of what Mr. Hollis bas done, and what he expected from this Country in Profecution of his Defign; which was what fuggested to me the Design proposed above. Some Gentlemen seem to be of Opinion, that this is not an bappy Time to fet such a Design on Foot; which for ought I know is true; but I do not think it best to postpone it on that Account. For who knows when we shall have a better Time? is possible it may be worse. Nor would I wish to have your bleffed MASTER take you from us, 'till you have help'd in laying this Foundation also for the Increase of Glory to his Name by promoting this Scheme, on which I confess my Heart is much set, and which will (I hope) prosper the better for your countenancing it.

I thank you for your kind Letter, and for the Pamphetets that accompanied it, and am,

with great Honour and Reverence

your most obliged

humble Servant

John Sergeant.

Hadley, August 9.

P.S. As I have tho't it necessary there should be some Persons proposed to receive and disburse the Monies, that may be collected for the Purpose above, I have thought of the Hon. Col. Stoddard, and Col. Porter, the Rev. Mr. Edwards of Northampton, Major Williams, and Col. Oliver Partridge for this Purpose; with whom I have conversed on the Affair, and have their Consent to be proposed as Persons willing to take this Trouble on them. Which you may, if you please, signify to the World.

7. S.

Dr.

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Dr. Colman's Return

in Compliance with Mr. Sergeant's Request.

Boston, August 22. 1743.

openly to address and oblige me, I do most willingly publish his Letter: And if my Name and Hand can serve in any Measure to promote the bappy Foundation which his Heart is set on, (I humbly hope under some special Influence from above) I give them with all my Heart; with Thanksgiving to GOD who many Years ago was pleas'd to incline my Honour'd Friend and Rev. Brother Mr. Isaac Hollis (then of London) into those Bounties to us, which are now issuing in This Proposal of a Boarding-School for the more effectual Instruction and Education of the Indian Children in the Western Borders of our Province.

It was about the Year 1731,2 that Mr. Isaac Hollis, (Nephew to Thomas Hollis, Esq; the great Benefactor to Harvard College, and soon after his pious Uncle's Decease) sent me a bundred Pounds Sterling, with his particular Directions how to distribute and lay it out; adding, "that he had seen many of my Letters to his Uncle and his to me, which now led him into his.

Writing to me and this his Gift to us.

In the Year 1734, when he had feen the printed Account of the Ordination of Messieurs Parker, Hinsdel

Hinsale and Secombe, and their Mission to the Indian Tribes on the Eastern and Western Borders of New-England; Mr. Hollis then earnestly made me a most generous Offer of twenty Pounds Sterling per Annum, for Ever, for the Support of a fourth Missionary; but in Faithfulness I advis'd against such a Disposition of his Money; and as earnestly proposed to him the Application of it for the Support of a Missionary thro' the wide Spread of the destitute Settlements I had heard of in the Province of New-Jersey; but he did not

approve of my Advice.

Within two Years after this I heard of a very promising Door opening for the Gospel among the Indian Tribe at Hossatonnoc, and that a Person of Mr. Sergeant's Character for Piety and Learning, (then One of the Tutors in Yale College in Connecticut) was willing to quit his Fellowship and the Prospects he reasonably might have of one of the best Settlements our Country could afford him, in any of our vacant Churches; and to devote himself to the Glory of Christ in the Service of the Souls of those poor Heathen Families; Whereupon I immediately let Mr. Hollis know, that now I could freely and earnestly advise him to fix his twenty Pounds Sterling per An. for the Support of this Mission:

In Answer to this Motion, Novemb. 19. 1736. I receiv'd from Mr. Hollis his Bill on Col. Wendel to pay 56 l. Sterl. for the Education of twelve Indian Boys at Hossatonnoc, under the Care of the Rev. Mr. Sergeant; and Aug. 15. 1738. I had a second Order from him for 343 l. our Money; and again May 17. 1740. a third Order for 447 l. 95.: (Errors

excepted.)

Upon this gracious Call, and bountiful Direction of Divine Providence, Mr. Sergeant has been laying out himself gladly from Year to Year, in the Strength of GOD, in the Trust committed to him, with Caution, Care and Diligence, according to the Mea-

fure of Wisdom given him from on High; whence every good and perfett Gift comes down, both the

Heart and Opportunity for the doing Good.

On the Sixth of May 1743. Mr. Sergeant cover'd to me a Letter to be forwarded to the Rev. Mr. Hollis, giving him a particular Account, of the laying " out his Moneys for the Maintenance of his Boys; " and of the Methods be had used for the cultivating " Humanity, and introducing the English Tongue and " Manners among them, and for their Proficiency in " Knowledge, Virtue and Piety; by which Means " through the Bleffing of GOD, several of them are " affected with a Sense and Relish of Divine Things; " and One of them in particular has made extraordi-" nary Progress in his Learning, and appears truly " pious, and has been fingularly serviceable to him, " affifting him in his Translations Expositions and " Applications of the Scripture; and also very " belpful among the young Indians in a general reli-"gious Concern that has of late prevailed among them. Mr. Sergeant adds, "that this young In-" dian is already well qualified to keep School among " his Countrymen; and within a few Years will pro-" bably be fit to be a Preacher of the Gospel to them. "Two or three other of his Boys, Mr. Sergeant " fays, are ferviceable in improving the rest of the " Indians in Knowledge and Virtue; and he adds, - " that it had been a continued Series of unwearied "Kindness to the Indians, that had at length intirely " overcome their Jealousies and Suspicions; and gain'd an almost universal Disposition in them to receive " Instruction. He then inform'd Mr. Hollis, " that he has had

" in his Mind, for some Years, to set up a free board-" ing School for the Education of Indian Children, " in which he proposes that they be brought " up to Labour as well as Learning and the Exer-" cises of Devotion; with which Proposal the Indians " feem

" feem to be mightily taken; being fensible of their " Folly in their being formerly so backward to im-

" prove the Advantages put into their Hand.

Upon all Mr. Sergeant adds his " Prayer, that Al-" mighty Power may effect the merciful Purpose of " Sovereign Grace among them ! - and then con-

" cludes with a free and noble Declaration to Mr.

" Hollis in the following Words,

" Sir, As to your making any Allowance to Me, " for my Care and Trouble, of which you speak in " your very obliging Letter to me, I neither ask " nor defire it, and I beg of you not to think of it; " for I should indeed be ashamed to accept any thing " of you (though my stated Allowance is not large) " but your Intercessions at the Throne of Grace for " me, of which I stand in great Need. - " We can " never be thankful enough to You, under GOD, " for having put it in our Power to do so much to " promote our general Defign. Through your Li-" beralities Thanksgivings abound to GOD, who I am " fure will reward your Charity; and I doubt not

" but Generations to come will bless your Name, and

" you will find your Reward in Eternity. --

John Sergeant.

I was fo charm'd with the Spirit and Contents of this Letter, that I took a Copy of it before I feal'd it up and forwarded it to Mr. Hollis: And not only fo, but old as I am, and unapt now to transcribe, yet I wrote feveral Copies, and fent one to an Honourable Member of the Corporation at London, who have the Distribution of the Indian Fund; another to the worthy Secretary of their Honourable Commissioners here at Boston; and yet a third to a Rev. Minister in Scotland, if he fees good to communicate it to the Secretary of the Honourable Society for propagating Christian Knowledge at Edinburgh; and after all I publish'd it in the Weekly Christian History at Boston, No. 19. So that I have in a Manner prevented, and abunda: tly

abundantly answered Mr. Sergeant's Request to me in bis present Letter before it came; and gone beyond all he could imagine or expect from me, in way of presacing and recommending bis pious Design and Proposal. And I can truly add, that I shall account my self honour'd by GOD in my advanced Age, if I may sinish my Course of Services to my Country, and the Chnrches of CHRIST here, by ministring now under my dear younger Brother, in this his servent devoting his Life and Powers to the Glory of GOD in

the Salvation of the Heathen.

I even dare therefore to recommend Him and his proposed Boarding-School, not only to the pious and Charitable among our selves, nor only to those of the Denomination of New-England in our Nation and Provinces; but also (might it not be thought presumptuous) even to the most Honourable Societies for propagating the Gospel and of Christian Knowledge in London and Edinburgh; for their generous Assistances to a Projection truly Catholic, and without respect of Parties; which I hope the Divine Province may be laying by the Hands of his Servants, Mr. Hollis and Mr. Sergeant, in this obscure Corner of our Province at Stockbridge, alias Hosfatonnoc, for a more effectual Entrance among the Indians than we have yet seen.

But there are two or three Things more, that I find my felf obliged to hint at, before I conclude

the present Writing.

One is (as Mr. Sergeant requests of me in his Letter) to intimate to the Public Mr, Hollis his Expectations from Us here in New-England. And indeed in several of his Letters to me he has wrote with some Discouragement of Spirit on this Head; "Why We, "a People of such Name for Religion, do not exert our selves more in Prosecution of like Essays for a more effectual gospelizing the Heathen round about us? And now that He has advanc'd as he

" has done for the Education of a Number at Hossa" tonnoc; he hears of none of our rich Men falling

" in with their Affistances.

This has been Matter of Stumbling to him, and I wish the Block may be now removed by the Contributions of many to the School proposed: which may be an Odour of a sweet Smell, a Sacrifice acceptable

and pleasing to GOD.

Another Thing suggested by Mr. Sergeant, and a most wife and necessary one in the present Case, is-" his taking in Girls as well as Boys, if Providence " fucceed the Defign, and a Fund fufficient to car-" ry it on can be procured: I must needs add on this Head, that this Proposal is a Matter of absolute Necessity, wherein we are not left at Liberty either as Men or Christians; for there cannot be a Propagation of Religion among any People without an equal Regard to both Sexes; not only because Females are alike precious Souls, form'd for GOD and Religion as much as the Males; but also because the Care for the Souls of Children in Families, and more especially in those of low Degree, lies chiefly upon the Mothers for the first feven or eight Years: Which is an Observation or Remark, which I had the Honour to make unto my dear and honour'd ancient Friend Henry Newman Efg; Secretary to the Honourable and Reverend Society for promoting Christian Knowledge; which when he had communicated to THEM, they put it into print, and sent it to the Directors of the 1764 Schools; (if I have not miscounted) that so a greater Proportion of Girls might be taken into them to receive a religious Education for the fake of their Posterity, and therein for the more effectual answering the very End of their Charity-Schools*. By which Instance I received the following Instruction " what an unknown and untho't of

^{*} See the printed Account of the Society Anno 1738.P.26.

Good,

Good, a Man may do by a fingle and occasional right Tho't or Line; it proving in the Case before me, as if I had wrote 1764 Letters to the Directors of so many Schools, for the Service of Posterity, and in savour of female Children: And what added a thousand-fold more to the Virtue and Force of my Line, was the Approbation of so venerable a Body of Gentlemen, and their Recommendation of it to the Observation of the Overseers

of their respective Schools.

I have now only to add upon Mr. Sergeant's Postfcript, — that the Gentlemen whom he has nam'd to receive and disburse the Moneys which may be given for the building and support of his Boarding-School, are Persons of known Character among us for Integrity and Honour; to whom I only wish may be added the Rev. Mr. Stephen Williams of Springfield; whom it pleased GOD to use so much as a zealous and laborious Instrument of the Settlement of the Gospel at

Hosfatonnoc.

Now Thanks be to GOD for his Unspeakable Gift, a right liberal Heart and Hand, in one Part of his Church and another. No Tongue of Man can fully speak of it! or enough celebrate it! Unspeakable is the Good done to the World by it! unspeakable is the Glory redounding to the Name of CHRIST from it! and also the Good to our selves in it and from it is unspeakable, both thro' the Life that now is, and in that which is to come! Only the Day of Christ can reveal the Glories and Joys awaiting it thro' a blessed Eternity: "—Lord, when saw we thee bungry and fed thee? or thirsty and gave thee Drink? —Verily in as much as you did it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto Me.

2 JY 61 Benjamin Colman.

